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## Their planet is literally a hell and we should probably nuke it or something

OC OC

This whole mission was complete and utter bullshit, and we all knew it.

There was pomp and circumstance. One of the exploration probes we had sent out actually found something. We didn't know *what*, quite yet, but almost all of our first contacts had been peaceful, and pretty much everyone ended up getting along.

We were expecting to find signs of intelligent life in a more populated part of the galaxy; more stars generally means more life. But it wasn't technically impossible or anything for life to be found more secluded.

The probe had detected radio chatter in the middle of *bumblefuck nowhere*.

It was pretty far from civilized space, so we'd have to use a rather imprecise jump drive to get to the general vicinity of the signal, but after that we would have to track it down ourselves. Usually the first contact team will hang in orbit for a while, get to know the culture and learn the language. We'd give them the classic "we come in peace" spiel and see how much work it would take to uplift them to space flight and all that.

There had only ever been one civilization we didn't help, and that was because they were genocidal maniacs and they tried to shoot us down even after we told them we weren't hostile. Now we just knock anything they make out of orbit and carry on as normal.

Anyways, so we jumped in around the most likely candidate. It was a trinary system; the two innermost stars were a bust, because there's no way that stars that big can have habitable planets. Next we tried the normal sized red one that was orbiting the two, and there was nothing of interest. We were pretty confused, as there was only one more system in the region that it could be. Thing is, that system was a massive yellow star, so there's no way it was an uncontacted civilization.

So we jump in, expecting maybe to find an old satellite or *very* lost ship, assuming our probe didn't just malfunction and spit out a false positive. We looked around for a while, and no, it wasn't some lost idiot or a satellite. The third planet from the star was actually sending out some pretty intense signals.

We kind of looked at each other, because this shouldn't be possible. My planet was what it was supposed to be like: rocky planet orbiting a calm, normal sized, red star. One side always faced the star, making it into a nice, tropical ocean. The other side was another ocean - dark and cooler, but still pretty calm. The middle bit was ideal. It had the perfect amount of constant sunlight, a perpetual warm ocean breeze. It had mild, predictable weather. It had a ton of oxygen for a healthy biosphere, and a strong magnetic field that kept out the radiation.

Simply put, stars this big just couldn't support a habitable world. I mean, it's "technically" possible, but there are so many things that would have to go right, it would just be too unlikely.

And yet, here we were. We fly closer in, and we see a steaming pile of shit planet. It's enormous, for one. At least double the gravity of even the biggest habitable planet we knew. Stepping on the damn thing would have broken every one of my legs immediately. Second, it was just fucking spinning all over the place, at an angle. The temperature would *have* to be inconsistent as hell. How could life evolve in this place? Not only that, but the atmosphere was terrible. It was so unbelievably thick, and it was full of nitrogen.

We look at the land, and the poles are covered in water-ice, the equator is covered in vast swathes of barren, dry land. Land itself makes up only about thirty percent of the planet.

Anything surviving there would have to be seriously adept at living without oxygen, because - percent wise - it was only like half of what planets normally have. Anything living there would also have to be robust like nothing else, because just about any spot you pick will have to deal with both sunlight and the lack thereof on a *regular* basis, and temperature fluctuations would alternately freeze and overheat most normal organisms to death rather quickly.

Not only that, but there's the big-ass moon wreaking havoc with the ocean. Oceans and bodies of water just randomly flood areas, the oceans randomly form giant killer waves that destroy the coastline. The weather is terrible, too. Storms get absolutely gargantuan, giant funnels of tornadoes of death tear places up regularly, and the static electricity that builds up in the clouds zaps stuff all the time.

Also, it's geologically unstable, as an extra "fuck you" to anything living there. There are mountains that spew molten rock all over the place and release plumes of deadly gasses and sun-blocking ash. The crust is broken up into countless, constantly moving plates that randomly move around and shake everything up.

And the craziest part is the godforsaken animals that live there.

See, on a normal, reasonable planet, light is constant. After all, one spot on a tidally locked planet will either be always sunny or always dark, or somewhere in-between. As a result, everything evolved to constantly be on the lookout for predators or for food,

because there wasn't ever any time you could take a serious break. Lying down in the light surrounded by predators adapted for the light is suicide. Lying in the dark with predators adapted for the dark is similarly suicidal.

You have to be constantly vigilant, but brains chew through energy and produce a ton of waste. Too much, in fact for the body to get rid of fast enough if you use every brain cell to the max. So if my brain was at 100% all the time, it would quickly have so much waste built up it wouldn't function properly, and that could be fatal, so the brains of all normal animals are limited to a reasonable speed.

These hell animals, in a sense, get a bit of respite. They can rest during periods where other predators can't operate properly, which means they get time to clear their brains of excess waste. This means that they've all adapted to use their brains to the absolute max, all the time, except during breaks they call "sleep".

When we first started decoding the radio messages they were spewing out all the time, it was shocking. A normal "human", the dominant species, can process information at more than double the speed of me, and I'm pretty sharp as far as sapient creatures go.

Just trying to read their comms *after* they were decoded and translated was a nightmare, because we got information far, far faster than we could deal with it. A human could easily hold a conversation with two of us at a time, and still get bored. And that's not all.

When we were first observing them, we expected they wouldn't see us coming, that we'd have a grace period to get everything figured out. Turns out, they absolutely knew about us, and they were scrambling to assemble thermonuclear weapons to hit our ship while we were bumbling around in front of their faces, not answering their hails. Their tech was far better than the level normally needed to get to space, but the sheer thickness of their atmosphere and gravity of their planet made it extremely hard to get into orbit.

It's a good thing, too, because they could be a serious threat if they got into space.

First, there's the thing about thinking faster than any other creature in the galaxy. They could just shoot you before you had a chance to respond, and that would be that.

They have insane heat dissipation; their entire body is practically hairless, and they can just exude water to cool themselves in hot climates. This works so well, they originally hunted by running prey to death via exhaustion. They can outlast pretty much any animal they want in terms of physical exertion.

Don't think the cold is safe, either. They cover themselves in layers of thermal insulators regularly. They're endothermic, so they produce their own heat and these insulators trap it. This is so effective, they can go just about anywhere they please.

They're also pack animals, which means you're never dealing with just one. They can form relatively cohesive groups in the hundreds of millions. They communicate visually, and through sound, so they can transmit information extremely fast.

They descend from tree-dwelling animals, so they can follow you up most vertical surfaces if they want. They're adapted for running, so they can outrun you if you try to run away on flat land. They can use their upper limbs as projectile throwers, so distance doesn't always cut it. Their endurance and lack of hair makes them good swimmers, too.

They're used to stupidly high gravity, so they can tolerate anything you can. They need less than half the oxygen of you or me, so don't try to choke them out by screwing with atmosphere settings on a ship.

Funnily enough, in terms of strength, they're pretty pathetic on their planet. They can only kill most animals there by using tools. For us, though, it's a different story. The weakest of them is on par with the strongest of us.

And the things they can't do well at all, like smelling, sprinting, heavy lifting, or hearing, can absolutely be done by the animals they've adopted. They've adopted, artificially evolved, and put to use dozens of animals: canines, felines, and dozens of other animals that supplement their abilities.

Simply put, they scared the shit out of us and violated pretty much every law of nature. We said "hi" and noped out of there, we didn't tell them where our planets were and we didn't try giving them technology. Their planet is a literal death world, they're in a near perpetual state of war, and we should either just nuke the planet back to whatever sadistic dimension it came from or placate the fuck out of them, because somehow they reverse engineered one of our engines, and they have a habit of weaponizing just about anything they touch.